

Perspective of Teachers:

Katie Hipple

Northwest Middle School – Salt Lake City School District

7th grade math and math lab

katie.hipple@slcschools.org 801-300-0098

1989 South 500 East

Salt Lake City, UT 84105

Question #1: What are the key elements for high student achievement?

1. Meaningful Learning Opportunities

- i. Use Common Core Standards, students' interests, students learning styles to create relevant objectives and meaningful learning activities and tasks to connect to real life application. Students are not memorizers but need to be thinkers and problem solvers.

2. Use Data Effectively

- i. Use variety of assessments throughout the year (CRT, UTIPS, District Assessment, Classroom Exit Cards, etc.)
- ii. Use student data in PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) to collaborate
 - 1. Create informal/formal assessments
 - 2. Curriculum pacing
 - 3. Create meaningful tasks
 - 4. Analyze student concept misunderstandings
 - 5. Work with department coaches to meet the needs of student
- iii. Determine student placement and opportunities
 - 1. Adapt Tier 1 instruction to help individuals
 - 2. Intervention class placement (math lab)
- iv. Teacher accountability – public, honest, and used to better instruction

3. Positive School Culture

- i. High Expectations – School motto “Not just smart, Northwest smart!”
- ii. School Incentive Program – Warrior Club (need 3.2 GPA) Huge motivator for our students (Ex. Club card, name on wall, raffles, activities)

Question #2: What are the challenges?

1. *Low reading comprehension* (7th grade students come to us reading at a 4th grade level)
2. *Low content vocabulary* (Majority of students are English Language Learners)

Question #3: What can legislators do or not do to help education?

Invest in students!

1. *Make sure teachers have resources to provide meaningful learning opportunities*
 - a. Classroom resources – books, calculators, manipulatives, etc.
 - b. Outside resources – learning in the fields found within the boundaries of our city such as businesses and industry.
2. *Use data effectively*
 - a. Ensure collaboration time for teachers to learn and grow
 - b. Increase number of effective teachers to provide intervention classes to non-proficient student
 - c. Ensure class size is appropriate for students to be high achievers
3. *Reinforce high expectations in school culture and school wide incentive programs*

In the end, we want student to not only be high achievers in Utah but high achievers at a national level.

Question #4: What is the #1 thing Legislators should spend money on?

Invest in students, so make sure class sizes are appropriate and teachers are effective through collaboration and training.

Question #5: What tests are required to give to students? Which would you eliminate?

State test (CRT or new assessment) and Quarterly District tests are now required in our math department. Northwest eliminated a benchmark test last year.

Question #6: Are we headed in the right direction with teacher evaluations?

Yes. Make sure feedback is included in evaluations other than just check the box. Also, involve effective teachers along with administrators in the process.

Question #7: Should we be following the Common Core Standards?

Yes, the Common Core is the framework to build meaningful learning opportunities for students.